

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
198900256**

American Air AA5 - Traveller

13 December 1989

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NOTE: All air safety occurrences reported to the ATSB are categorised and recorded. For a detailed explanation on Category definitions please refer to the ATSB website at www.atsb.gov.au.

Occurrence Number: 198900256 **Occurrence Type:** Accident
Location: Cork Tree Well (40 km north Laverton) WA
Date: 13 December 1989 **Time:** 1830
Highest Injury Level: Serious
Injuries:

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None
Crew	0	0	0	0
Ground	0	0	0	-
Passenger	0	1	2	0
Total	0	1	3	0

Aircraft Details: American Air AA5 -
Traveller
Registration: VH-FXU
Serial Number: AA5-0722
Operation Type: Private
Damage Level: Substantial
Departure Point: Cork Tree Well WA
Departure Time: 1740
Destination: Cork Tree Well WA

Approved for Release: 28th February 1990

Circumstances:

On the day of the accident, the pilot took three of her work colleagues on a tour of the mine pits to the North of the camp. When the aircraft returned to the mine's airstrip, the pilot made a low pass over the camp with the canopy fully opened to drop water bombs, before commencing a climbing left turn to rejoin the circuit for a landing. Whilst the aircraft was climbing, the aircraft stalled. The pilot could not regain control before the aircraft collided with the trees. The pilot had been previously instructed not to make low passes over the campsite. The aircraft flight manual indicates that flight with the canopy partly open, but not fully open, is permissible. The effect of a fully opened canopy on the aerodynamics of the aircraft was not determined. The pilot apparently failed to ensure that she maintained a sufficient margin above the stalling speed during the climb out following the pass. This accident was not the subject of an on-scene investigation.

Significant Factors:

The following factors were considered relevant to the development of the accident

1. The pilot ignored previous instructions not to make low passes over the campsite.
2. The pilot operated with the aircraft canopy fully open, which may have affected the performance of the aircraft.
3. The pilot failed to maintain adequate airspeed.
4. There was insufficient height available for the pilot to recover before the aircraft collided with the trees.